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EDITORS/PHOTOGRAPHERS: YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE CAKE-CUTTING CEREMONY AND TAKE PHOTOS IF YOU WISH.

96-171

June 26, 1996

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

WEIU-TV TO CELEBRATE 10TH ANNIVERSARY

CHARLESTON -- Eastern Illinois University's WEIU-TV will kick off its year-long 10th anniversary celebration on Friday, June 28, with a cake cutting ceremony at 1 p.m. in the lobby of Old Main.

Eastern President David Jorns and members of the Radio and TV Center Board and the Friends of WEIU Board will join WEIU-TV staff in launching the first in a series of events planned during the year.

"WEIU-TV has been offering quality educational, family and locally-produced programming for 10 years. We plan to continue our strong commitment to quality programming for viewers in our 11-county service area in east central Illinois well into the next decade and beyond," said John Beabout, general manager for WEIU-TV.

The first event open to the public will be Children's Day at Rockome Gardens in Arcola July 30 through Aug. 4. Both Lambchop and Mr. McFeely from Mr. Roger's Neighborhood will be on hand to greet children. WEIU-TV will sponsor children's games

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and other activities that correspond with their educational programming.

A 10th anniversary celebration, which will be open to the public, is scheduled for Nov. 2 in the University Union Grand Ballroom, to be followed by the "Rebel with a Cause Part II" fund-raising auction on Feb. 23. Other events are planned through June 30.

Mary Ann Pearman, chair of the Friends of WEIU Board, is chairing the 10th anniversary celebration. Honorary co-chairs are Mike Woolworth of Arcola/Champaign, Eli Sidwell of Charleston, Beth Martin of Effingham, Jim Upchurch of Mattoon, Lori Bridwell of Paris and Karla Birkofer of Robinson.

~~WEIU-TV Channel 51~~ began broadcast operations on July 1, 1986 and became a PBS affiliate in January, 1992.

The station serves 112,000 households in east central Illinois with an estimated 34,000 households tuning into WEIU-TV every day. WEIU-TV produces and broadcasts more than 300 hours of locally produced programming annually, including *EIU Connection*, *Panther Country*, *News-Scan* and *The Lynch Colloquium*.

In addition to its regular programming, WEIU-TV is utilizing distance learning technology to make a variety of programs available to public schools and to viewers of the local cable system.

WEIU-TV also is actively engaged in educational outreach projects that include "Extending Mr. Roger's Neighborhood" and "Sesame Street Preschool Educational Program." It was chosen as one of the 10 model sites for the Family Literacy Alliance Project, providing *Reading Rainbow*-based outreach through libraries and schools. The station also

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WEIU

is a model site for PBS' "Ready to Learn Project" and "Shining Time Station."

Beabout and his staff have been recognized by America's Public Television Stations for their contributions to public television's successful defense of the "must carry" statute before the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia in Turner vs. FCC (1995).

WEIU-TV was among 12 PBS stations in the country that helped defend the "must carry" law obligating cable systems to carry PBS stations. As a result of the "must carry" ruling, WEIU-TV is now carried on more than 50 cable systems in east central Illinois, enabling it to double its viewership and improve service and outreach.